

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Original) Process for preparing 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)benzylalcohol which comprises reacting a 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)-phenylmagnesium halide with solid paraformaldehyde in a solvent.
2. (Original) Process according to claim 1, characterised in that said solvent is an aliphatic ether.
3. (Original) Process according to claim 2, characterised in that said aliphatic ether is tetrahydrofuran (THF).
4. (Original) Process according to claim 1, characterised in that said solvent is a mixture of aliphatic ethers and aromatic hydrocarbons.
5. (Original) Process according to claim 4, characterised in that the aliphatic ether is selected from diethyl ether, THF, methyl-THF, isobutyl-ether, dimethoxyethane (DME), diethoxyethane, diglyme, butyl-diglyme, ethyl- diglyme and triglyme.
6. (Original) Process according to claim 4, characterised in that the aromatic hydrocarbon is selected from toluene, o,m,p-xylenes, o,m,p-tetrafluoroxylenes and 1,3-bis(trifluoromethyl)benzene.

7. (Original) Process according to claim 4, characterised in that the reaction solvent is a mixture of THF and an aromatic hydrocarbon.

8. (Original) Process according to claim 7, characterised in that the reaction solvent is a mixture of THF and an aromatic hydrocarbon selected from toluene and 1,3-bis(trifluoromethyl) benzene.

9. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 7-~~or~~ 8, characterised in that said mixture comprises from 20 to 60% p/p of THF.

10. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~any one of the previous claims~~ claim 1, characterised in that the 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)-phenylmagnesium halide is selected from 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl) -phenylmagnesium bromide and 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)-phenylmagnesium chloride.

11. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~any one of the previous claims~~ claim 1, characterised in that the solid paraformaldehyde is used in an approximately equimolar amount or slightly in excess with respect to the 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)-phenylmagnesium halide.

12. (Original) Process according to claim 11 characterised in that the molar excess of paraformaldehyde is less than or equal to 5% with respect to the halide or 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)phenyl-magnesium.

13. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~any one of the previous claims~~claim 1, characterised in that the reaction temperature is between 30 and 90°C.

14. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~any one of the previous claims~~claim 1, characterised in that at the end of the reaction the adduct is hydrolysed with an aqueous solution of a mineral acid.

15. (Original) Process according to claim 14, characterised in that said mineral acid is selected from hydrochloric acid and sulphuric acid.

16. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~any one of the previous claims~~claim 1, characterised in that the 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)benzylalcohol is isolated by distillation or crystallisation.

17. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~any one of the previous claims~~claim 1, characterised in that the 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)benzylalcohol obtained is used as a reagent to obtain a 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)benzyl halide.

18. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~any one of the previous claims~~claim 1, characterised in that said 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)-phenyl-magnesium halide is obtained starting from the corresponding 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)-1-halobenzene by treatment with magnesium in a solvent selected from the solvents quoted in ~~claims 2 to 9~~above.

19. (Currently Amended) Process according to ~~claims~~claim 17 and ~~18~~, characterised in that:

(a) a 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)-phenyl magnesium halide is formed from a 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)-halobenzene in a solvent selected from the aliphatic ethers and a mixture of aliphatic ethers and aromatic hydrocarbons;

(b) solid paraformaldehyde is added to the reaction mixture thus obtained;

(c) the 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)benzylalcohol thus obtained is submitted to a halogenation reaction with HX where X is a halide, optionally in the presence of sulphuric acid;

(d) the 3,5-bis(trifluoromethyl)benzyl halide thus obtained is isolated.